

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 29, 2009 5:00 PM (ChST)

Joint Release No. 1

Department of Public Health and Social Services and Guam Homeland Security form Unified Command

Local Officials call for partial activation of EOCs following Swine Flu Outbreak in US

Over the last few days the Department of Public Health and Social Services (DPHSS) together with the Office of the Governor and Guam Homeland Security and the Office of Civil Defense (GHS/OCD) have been closely monitoring the events surrounding the Swine Influenza Outbreak in the United States and Mexico.

As a result of current preparation efforts and in anticipation of the arrival of Guam's portion of the Strategic National Stockpile (SNS) currently being deployed to all states and territories, a Unified Command (UC) following the Incident Command System (ICS) has been established between DPHSS and GHS/OCD.

As such, Guam Homeland Security Advisor in collaboration with the DPHSS, is calling for the partial activation of the State Emergency Operations Center (EOC) effective 8:00 a.m., April 30, 2009.

DPHSS will also be partially activating their Department Emergency Operations Center (DEOC) from their Central Public Health Facility in Mangilao.

Hours of operation for both the EOC and DEOC will be Monday through Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. until further notice.

While no public health emergency has been declared for Guam, nor has there been any reports of infected island residents, DPHSS and GHS/OCD are urging all residents exercise the following personal protective measures in an effort to ensure we minimize the risk of infection.

- Cover your nose and mouth with a tissue when you cough or sneeze. Throw the tissue in the trash after you use it.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water, especially after coughing or sneezing. Alcohol-based hand cleansers are also effective.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth. Germs spread that way.
- Try to avoid close contact with sick people.
 - Influenza is thought to spread mainly person-to-person through the coughing or sneezing of infected people
- If you get sick, stay home from work or school and limit your contact with others to keep from infecting them.

Local officials will continue to monitor this situation and provide periodic updates as more information becomes available.

For more information regarding the H1N1 Flu Outbreak (Swine Influenza) please visit the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website at http://www.cdc.gov/swineflu/general_info.htm or you may contact the Department of Public Health & Social Services at 735-0670.